

*Includes Aug. 20th Telephone Town Hall, Three Regional Town Halls, & Dozens of Meetings with Health Care Providers, Businesses, and Constituents*

(Washington, D.C.) -U.S. Representative Chet Edwards today announced a series of health care meetings with constituents throughout his district on the topic of health care over the next three weeks. Edwards will hold a telephone town hall meeting on Thursday August 20th from 6:30-8:00pm that will dial over 200,000 homes in all twelve District 17 counties.

Later in the month, Edwards will hold three regional town halls in Brazos, McLennan, and Johnson counties. Dates and locations for regional town hall meetings will be announced once details are finalized. From Monday through Saturday of this week, he will have 19 meetings with doctors, nurses, hospitals, small businesses, working families, community leaders and local journalists.

"I intend to spend the next three weeks carefully listening to health care providers and everyday citizens in our district about what the proposed health care reforms would mean for them and their families. I will not vote for a single-payer, Canadian-style nationalized health care plan, and before I make any commitment on any health care legislation in Congress, I want to hear the views and concerns of as many constituents as possible. That is why I made it clear earlier this month that I would not support a vote on health care in the U.S. House before Members of Congress had a chance to carefully review the legislation and to listen to constituents," commented Edwards.

"In addition to the intensive health care schedule we had planned weeks ago, including a telephone town hall call to over 200,000 homes in twelve counties, I am adding three regional public town hall meetings. While I had some initial concerns about a handful of people disrupting the discussion, the overriding principle for me is to allow district constituents the opportunity to ask questions, have their voices heard, and participate in an honest dialogue on health care.

"Over the last several days, a number of protestors have agreed with me that it would be inappropriate to disrupt public meetings on health care. I appreciated their comments and hope they will keep their commitment to respect the rights of all citizens to be heard.

"The issue of health care is vitally important to our families, businesses and nation's future. By having open, honest and respectful discussions, I hope we can further the cause of protecting

the strengths of our present health care system while addressing the concerns of rising health care costs," concluded Edwards.

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